

## International News

### CHILE

There is a new "*hogar*" (boarding house) for Rapanui students, located in the part of Viña del Mar that is known as Recreo. The *hogar* now has 30 Rapanui students, 5 more than last year. The *hogar* provides free meals for the students, pays for their studies in private establishments, their uniforms and medical expenses, among other things. Formerly there were two *hogares*, located at various times in Viña, Valparaíso, and in Quilpue, where the students were separated by sex. The new establishment has both sexes at one boarding house. This latest *hogar de Isla de Pasqua* was inaugurated in May and will permit young islanders to continue their studies on the continent.

The inauguration party included invited guests and Rapanui dancers and the ceremony ended with a traditional *curo* (earth oven). The director of the *hogar* is Rodolfo Castillo; it is financed by the Fondo de Ministros under the Ministry of the Interior.

25 May, *El Mercurio de Valparaíso*

### FRANCE

Dr. Adolfo Fernandez Correa, a director of the Fonck Museum in Viña del Mar, Chile, attended the inauguration of the Easter Island exhibition in Bordeaux. The following is his report.

On April 20th, the inauguration of an exhibition of Easter Island and Polynesia was held at the Musée d'Aquitaine in Bordeaux, France. In attendance were Mr. Alain Juppe, Prime Minister of France and Mayor of Bordeaux; Sr. Jacobo Hey Paoa, Governor of Easter Island; Sr. Jaime Estevez, President of the Chamber of Deputies of the Chilean Congress; and Sr. J. Manuel Morales, the Chilean Ambassador to France. Officially-invited visitors from Chilean museums included the Rev. Fernando Vasquez and Dr. Adolfo Fernandez C.; Sra. Marta Cruz-Coke M. and Sr. Angel Cabeza M. from the Dirección de Bibliotecas, Archivos y Museos (DIBAM); and Sra. Perla Fontecilla of the Ministry of Education. Bordeaux itself is an old and beautiful city with many cultural activities, located on the banks of the river Garonne and surrounded by the famous vineyards of Medoc.

The objects exhibited were loaned principally by Chilean museums, including the Englert Museum of Easter Island, the Museums of Natural History of Santiago and La Serena, the La Merced Museum in Santiago, and the Fonck Museum in Viña del Mar. These last two supplied nearly 40% of the exhibition. There also were some pieces from private European collections. The same exhibition was shown with great success in Milan, Italy, and in Barcelona, Spain.

Without any doubt, the main attraction was the authentic *moai* loaned by the city of La Serena. It was placed in a large hall behind which was a wall with an immense photograph of the flank of the Rano Raraku volcano, cleverly illuminated so that it seemed like a late afternoon on the island. The visitors entering this hall were greatly impressed and spoke only in whispers. Three full-sized reproductions of *moai* stood in front of the museum.

The intent of the exhibition was to give an idea of the

cultures of the Polynesian region, with emphasis on the artistic aspects. Easter Island was featured. The head Curator, Mrs. Chantal Orgogozo, was responsible for mounting the exhibition. It was organized in the form of a circular walkway of several floors around the great hall where the *moai* was installed, enabling visitors to admire the statue from all different angles. One entered this through an area that represented the bridge of a sailing ship of the epoch of Captain Cook. Corresponding maps and navigation instruments were displayed. The original drawings of Pierre Loti were especially interesting.

In several glassed-in enclosures were objects representative of Melanesia, Micronesia, Tahiti, Hawaii, etc. Farther along came a large display of Rapanui objects, many shown for the first time outside of Chile; for example, original *rongorongo* tablets, the eye of a *moai*, etc.

The Museum d'Aquitaine provided brochures, posters, and a handsome catalogue, didactic material for students, and offered specialized information by means of a computer. Also there was a roundtable discussion of Rapa Nui with specialists from around the world in which some ten different topics were included such as navigation, analysis of astronomical studies, and the *rongorongo* script.

The exposition will be open until September 15 of this year and then the pieces loaned by Chile will be returned. The museum is expecting thousands of visitors who will have the only opportunity of seeing collected in one place some of the most representative examples of these cultures, especially Rapanui. The exhibit also allows the European world to see a part of the attractive patrimony of Chile.

### UNITED STATES

Las Vegas, Nevada. Two "replicas" of Easter Island statues have been removed from the front of the Tropicana hotel in Vegas. They were created for entrance decorations to the gambling casino/hotel in 1991, but recently fell from favor as part of the hotel remodeling. They will be replaced with a "classic Victorian garden". The statues (locally called Tiki gods) were 35 feet tall and each weighed 300,000 pounds. See RNJ 8(2):48 for a view of one of the statue heads in juxtaposition with the MGM-Grand lion and a pyramid. As is typically the case, these fake statue heads were inaccurate and really ugly versions of our beloved Rapa Nui *moai*.

## What's New in Polynesia

### BIKINI ATOLL

To most, Bikini is just a swimsuit. To thousands who were there when the bombs went off 50 years ago, it is a tragedy. This October, the National Academy of Sciences is to announce results of a study to determine whether sailors and soldiers present at the 1946 tests have died at unusually high rates, possibly due to radiation exposure. And in November, the Bikinians, with millions of dollars won in claims against the US, plan to begin the "scrape"--removal of radioactive topsoil from their island so they can return to it.

Two bombs were set off in the lagoon in 1946, drenching dozens of ships with radioactivity. Navy cleanup crews—without any protective clothing—tried to swab away contamination. They drank and showered in desalinated lagoon water, a major source of radiation. The tests stretched into the 1950s, and in 1954, the Castle Bravo thermonuclear blast covered Bikini with long-lasting fallout: the winds had shifted (a fact known by officials prior to the blast) but they decided not to postpone the test. By the 1970s veterans were filing claims for cancer and other illnesses but the Pentagon insisted the radiation exposure was low. By the 1980s, doubts were raised about the Pentagon's assessment of exposure and veterans began to make headway for congressional approval of disa

Displaced Bikinians, resettled on a rock bound isle called Kili, survived on canned foods as wards of the US government. In 1969 the atomic Energy Commission declared the island safe and moved more than 100 islanders back. But the AEC calculation was wrong. Returnees were ingesting high levels of cesium-137 from coconuts. They were shipped back to Kili in 1978.

However, Bikinians pressed their case in court and won almost \$200 million from the US government to support daily living and the decontamination process. But now the Bikinian population has soared to 2200. Nine hundred islanders remain on Kili, with others scattered around the Pacific. The big "scrape" is expected to remove 15 inches of contaminated soil from 100 acres in the Bikini village area. But there is a question as to where the soil will go. And will the Bikinians afford to later dig up the remaining 500 acres of contaminated land on the island? Can the island sustain such a high population? Bikini's future is still in doubt.

*Honolulu Advertiser July 14, 1996*

#### PALMYRA

A company known as KRV Inc. of New York is in the act of buying Palmyra from its current owners, the Fullard-Leo family of Hawai'i. Palmyra has a land area of only 12 square km and a maximum elevation of around two meters. The island is slated to become a storage place for nuclear waste. Palmyra is close to the Line Islands, thus Kiribati will be affected. In response, the Kiribati parliament has voted to oppose dumping on the atoll. According to Greenpeace Pacific, the island is to be used as an international storage facility for spent nuclear fuel and plutonium from Russia and the US. In exchange, hundreds of millions of dollars will be available for "economic development, education and environmental protection" for Pacific Island nations.

*Pacific News Bulletin, Vol. 11(6) for June 1996*

#### SUVA, FIJI

• A meeting organized by the South Pacific Regional Environment Programme and attended by participants from 19 countries produced a document and a resolution dealing with conservation of turtles in the region. In the past 50-100 years, the numbers of turtles have decreased so much that five of seven species are endangered. It was recommended that a total ban be placed on all commercial harvesting of these crea-

tures. The meeting also declared that the Philippines and Indonesia (which are unsustainably harvesting turtles) be pressured to reduce their harvest.

*The University of the South Pacific Bulletin, Vol. 29(14), 1996*

• David Burley of Simon Fraser University, Canada, has been conducting a research program on the Sigatoka sand dunes, a program that is an extension of Dr. Burley's work on Tonga. According to Burley, the archaeology shows that, some 3000 years ago, the inhabitants of Tonga and Fiji were the same people. They are identified by distinctive pottery fragments.

*The University of the South Pacific Bulletin, Vol. 29(16), 1996*

• Over 35 young scientists at USP are now trained in pollution assessment, the result of a five year program by scientists from USP and the University of Victoria, Canada. In addition to the training, ten workshops were conducted over the five-year period to provide hands-on experience and professional development for more than 100 government scientists and administrators throughout the South Pacific.

*The University of the South Pacific Bulletin, Vol. 29(17), 1996*

#### NEW ZEALAND

A *Te Hui Oranga* was held at Rangikohu Marae, Herekino, with people attending from Aotearoa, Hawai'i and Great Turtle Island. The *hui* reaffirmed five points: that Aotearoa is the rightful name of New Zealand and *te reo Maori* its mother tongue; for the Maori people reclaiming full and exclusive rights as a sovereign people; for the reclamation of Maori land, language and culture; for condemnation of the mass production of replicas of Maori artefacts and the bastardization of Maori culture for tourist exploitation; and for national and international support to protest against the Treaty of Waitangi in February of every year.

*Pacific News Bulletin 11(7) 1996*

#### COOK ISLANDS

Prime Minister Geoffrey Henry announced measures to relieve a critical financial crisis. Pay for public service was cut by 50% for the rest of the financial year, diplomatic posts abroad were closed, and board members of state-owned enterprises were requested to go without fees for a year. Henry announced to the nation that funds are insufficient to complete the year.

*Pacific News Bulletin, Vol. 11(5), 1996*

#### TAHITI

• The Tahoeraa Huiraatira party of Gaston Flosse was given a majority of 22 seats in the 41 seat Territorial Assembly. The pro-independence party, Tavini Huiraatira, increased its vote, winning ten seats (more than double its previous four seats). The results appear to show the polarization of views between those who are content with some increase

in autonomy and those who want independence from France. The parties in the middle are virtually eliminated.

*Pacific News Bulletin 11(5) 1996*

- The World Council of Churches has given US \$50,000 to help finance the first comprehensive independent study on the possible consequences of French nuclear testing on the health of the people in French Polynesia. Research will be conducted by two social economists from the University of Wageningen, Holland. They aim to collect solid data on the environmental and health situation of Polynesians who work at the test sites and inhabitants of the islands in an area of 500 km around the test sites.

The French government maintains that there have been no ill effects on health or environment.

- June 29th is a day of mourning in Tahiti as that date marks the handing of sovereignty to France by King Pomare V in the last century. This June 29th, the territorial government declared it a day of official ceremonies to mark the granting of French Polynesia's "special autonomy." In the words of Oscar Temaru, having autonomy celebrations on the same day was "an insult to native peoples." The pro-independence party called for demonstrations of protest. Reacting in a heavy-handed manner, armed paramilitary gendarmes blocked all roads into Papeete for several hours and banned any gathering not part of official events.

*Pacific News Bulletin 11(7) 1996*

## PITCAIRN

The Pitcairn Island Council has decided that "Pitkernese" is a language and not a dialect and so has decreed that there are two official languages spoken on Pitcairn: Pitkern and English

A new longboat, named "Moss" arrived by ship via the *Chiquita Jean*, and was lowered by crane into the water. The boat shed needed remodeling to accommodate this speedier and larger boat. A new dispensary arrived via barge and is being installed by the villagers at Adamstown.

Changes in the lifestyle of Pitcairn are reflected in new tennis courts and a volleyball court and new home construction. A market has been found in New Zealand for dried Pitcairn Plun (banana), and islanders are trapping lobster to sell to passing ships thus giving Pitcairners an opportunity to increase their incomes. Current issues under consideration include the eradication of rats from the Pitcairn Islands and the development of the Henderson Island Management Plan.

As of October 1996, subscriptions to *Pitcairn Miscellany* will cost \$8 per year instead of \$5. Subscriptions paid before October will be accepted at the old rate of \$5.

*The Pitcairn Miscellany, January-March 1996, Vols. 39:1-4.*

## HAWAI'I

- A surge in Hawaiian tourism from Asia boosted the total numbers of visitors to Hawai'i last year. Travelers from

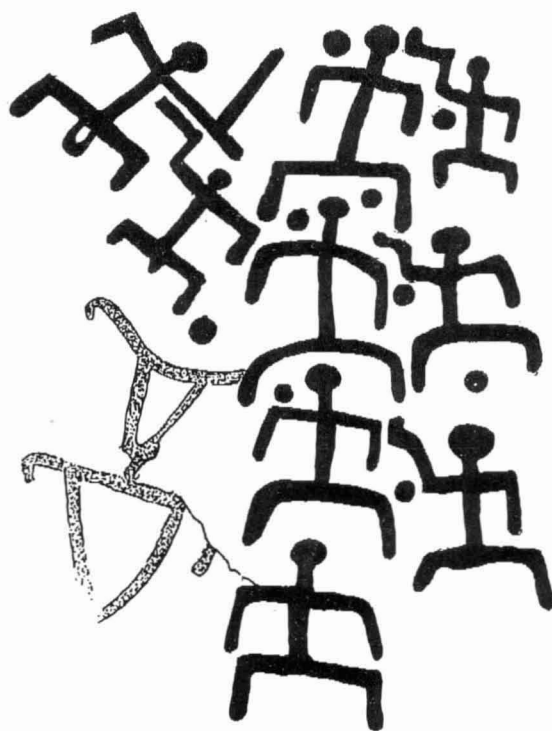
the East increased 10.8% while the number of tourists from the west fell by 1.6%. The Japanese came in record numbers: 1,998,860 (an increase of 13.8% over the previous year; this number comprises 30% of all Hawai'i's tourists).

Tourists from the mainland, Canada, and Europe continue to provide the largest numbers of tourists: 54% of all arrivals are from those areas.

- The layer of protective stratospheric ozone over Hawai'i reached its lowest level on record during the winter of 1994-5, making it one of the lowest recordings over a populated area. The US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration announced a record 40% increase in dangerous ultraviolet light on the Big Island.

*The Honolulu Advertiser, 11 and 12 July 1996.*

- Vandals have struck again on the Big Island. An excellent panel of petroglyphs was stolen from the area near Puako in South Kohala; the site is known locally as "Paniau". The petroglyph site was formerly hidden in kiawe forest but a new road was cut through the area in recent years, leaving the petroglyphs exposed and in full view. Vandals pried the panel off, breaking the lower part in the process. This is the third documented instance of petroglyphs being stolen from this area within the past few years.



Paniau, South Kohala. Drawing of the now-missing panel. The crack along the bottom indicates the point where the panel was broken off; the lower part, with remnants of two designs, remains at the site.

- Criticism of the archaeological work being done by the

Bishop Museum continues. Hawaiian newspapers report that inexperienced field workers were sent out to excavate sites in the path of the new highway on O'ahu called "H-3." Several archaeologists who were formerly associated with the project have resigned in protest. Archaeologist Charlotte Hunter who worked on the project for 18 months declared that workers lacked supervision, and Hawaiian activists such as Lilikala Kame'eleihiwa, a professor at the University of Hawai'i, not only claims that the work was sloppy but that the Bishop Museum has been overpaid. Museum president Donald Duckworth scoffed at critics, citing the Bishop's "century-long reputation for research excellence."

Work on H-3 archaeology has already spanned 12 years and cost the taxpayers \$17 million dollars. The state recently told the museum to cease work until there is a firm estimate of how much work remains and how much it will cost.

*The Honolulu Advertiser, 10 July 1996*

## What's New in Hanga Roa

- In July, the Rapa Nui teachers hosted a small but significant presentation ceremony in the Rapa Nui Language and Culture Department of the Easter Island school to recognize the completion of four manuals of the series *Mo Hāpi i te Vananga Rapa Nui* (For Learning the Rapa Nui Language). The new pedagogical aids consist of four 8½ x 13 inch, flip-chart type, illustrated manuals (not textbooks) for teachers to use in the classroom. A list of vocabulary and model sentences are suggested for each drawing or set of drawings on a page. It is hoped these manuals will be useful tools for stimulating and guiding the learning of the beginning students of Rapa Nui as a second language.

The manuals are the result of years of work by Rapa Nui residents, Nancy and Bob Weber, under the aegis of the Universidad Católica de Valparaíso and the Summer Institute of Linguistics.

Also officially presented at the ceremony was the manual *Programas Para la Enseñanza de la Lengua Rapa Nui*, prepared by the Rapa Nui teachers with the help of the Webers. This 88 page volume suggests learning objectives, teaching methods, and class planning for two types of language instruction: Rapa Nui as a first language and Rapa Nui as a second language.

The original plan was to produce 25 copies of each of the manuals via photocopy. However, upon seeing the materials that had been created, Chilean colleagues at the Universidad Católica de Valparaíso felt they merited higher quality publication. Extra funding provided by the Universidad allowed for the printing of 30 copies of each manual. Congratulations, Nancy and Bob!

- A reed raft voyage from Rapa Nui seeks to prove that ancient people were capable of crossing the seas before the Europeans. In December 1996 or January 1997, a prehistoric type reed boat whose design was copied from images carved

on rock by ancient inhabitants of the Chilean territory will depart on the first trip around the world, headed by Spaniard Kitin Muñoz. The project has two aims: to prove that the original inhabitants of the island were capable of making transoceanic voyages with boats, and also to demonstrate that there could have been a cultural, botanical and blood relationship between civilizations separated by the sea. The only prior similar experience was made by Heyerdahl [who, however, never came near Easter Island but landed in the Tuamotus.]

The boat is to be 40 meters (131 feet) long and made of reeds with 3 masts and a coating of fish oil to resist the water. Muñoz will have the help of 10 indigenous boat builders from Lake Titicaca in Bolivia who will use primitive techniques of fabricating boats from *totorá* reeds. The Spanish adventurer has established his point of departure as Anakena's beach where the first king of Rapa Nui, Hotu Matu'a, is said to have arrived.

The raft has been baptized Mata-Rangi (Eyes of Paradise) and its crew will consist of ten Rapanui who will take turns as they complete the goals of the voyage. Muñoz explained: "With this voyage I would like to demonstrate that many of the parallels that exist between different cultures and people, that today are attributed to arbitrary causes, had their reason in the voyages that had crossed seas and oceans in remote times and before the European expeditions of the 15th century."

The plan is to sail towards the west taking advantage of the prevailing winds and ocean currents and to complete three grand stages: Oceania, the Old World, and America. Muñoz stated, "In the first phase, the ship will travel through all the Polynesian islands such as Mangareva, Tahiti, Bora Bora, Tonga and Fiji reaching finally Australia. There the boat will be taken out of the water and dismantled to permit the reeds to dry, an operation that will take about two months."

With respect to provisions, Muñoz stated that food will be carried on board and furthermore, there will be fishing during all the voyage.

*Helmut Kaufmann, El Mercurio de Santiago, 17 June 1996.*

[Editor's Note: for an incisive alternative view of what has been called "Muñoz' Folly", see Rapa Nui Journal, Vol. 9(1):37-38, editorial by Frank Bock. The Muñoz project will cost 2 million dollars and the leader hopes to "prove" Heyerdahl's theory of South American settlement of Polynesia.]

- After a century, Islanders revived a ceremony at one of their solar observatories where it has been proved that the ancient Rapanui had considerable astronomical knowledge. On the 21st of June of this year, the day that marks the winter solstice, there was a the recreation of the ceremony "Ahi Renga"— to await the sunrise at the farthest north, and the beginning of the Southern hemisphere winter.

The author of this initiative is the administrator of the Parque Nacional Rapa Nui, archaeologist José Miguel Ramírez Aliaga, who explained in a series of meetings with local tour guides and teachers, that the ancient Rapanui in-



cluded among their considerable cultural activities a knowledge of astronomy that was related to the power of the religious aristocracy and the control of the production of food. A large part of this knowledge was lost during the downfall of the island society in the middle of the last century when the learned men disappeared as a result of slavery and epidemics.

However, the restoration of the patrimonial monuments of the island in the early '60s and the recent work of astronomers like William Liller, a Chilean resident, permitted the rescue of one of the most interesting themes and one that is little known in the historical and cultural development of the Rapanui: archaeoastronomy.

According to data found by Professor Liller, some dozen island *ahu* are oriented astronomically. Furthermore, the principal solar observatory of the island is the *ahu* called Huri a Urenga which was restored by the anthropologist William Mulloy in 1972. It is an inland *ahu* next to the principal road from Hanga Roa to Anakena and has a single *moai* that curiously has four hands.

The monument is oriented with precision towards the rising winter solstice sun, and the rising and setting sun at the equinoxes is marked with two hills towards the east and west respectively.

According to archaeologist José Miguel Ramírez, although



Weeds and debris being cleaned away from Ahu Huri a Urenga by the school children of the village. This site often is lost in waist-high grass. As Huri a Urenga is not within the area of the National Park, volunteer help is needed to keep the site maintained (Photo credit: J-M Ramírez).

the site is not included in the Parque Nacional Rapanui that recently was incorporated in the list of the Patrimony of Humanity of UNESCO, it is of interest to all to recuperate a part of the special relevance of the cultural heritage and thus place a high value on this attractive tourist site. And in fact, the Island attracts a selective tourism more interested in the culture than in the beaches, and this is a topic that merits ample diffusion.

This initiative combines the work of islanders concerned with the rescue and preservation of the Rapanui culture

through various organizations supported by entities such as the Hanga Roa Municipalidad, the Lorenzo Baeza Vega school, and CONAF.

*By Helmut Kaufmann, El Mercurio de Santiago,  
17 June 1996*

• The dates are set for the 1997 Tapati Rapa Nui: January 31st to February 8th. If you plan to attend, don't wait until the last minute to try to get a flight and/or a reservation on the island.

• Conaf (National Parks of Chile) has been busy making upgrades at several of the island's archaeological sites. According to José Miguel Ramírez, Dir. Provincial Conaf, new signs and barriers are at Orongo; there are plans for clearing the forest around the petroglyph rocks in the crater of Rano Kau and building a high path around it to prevent visitors from walking on it; new ornamental trees are being planted along the main street in the village; trails have been constructed or upgraded around the statue quarry at Rano Raraku; a *hare paenga* at the quarry has been restored; and the picnic area at the nearby ranger's house has been improved with tables and a toilet. A ranger station is at the entrance to the site and an information booklet is in press. In their nursery at Mataverí, over 2000 *mako'i* seedlings have been grown for replanting in the island. In addition, more trees have been planted at Anakena plus a *hare paenga* (the so-called "house of Hotu Matu'a") at Anakena is being restored.

Conaf now has a publication for local distribution, *Ka Unga te Rongo*. These fliers describe various projects including the reintroduction of *toromiro* trees and such things as conservation of the archaeological sites. For the past three years, Conaf has given weekly classes on Easter Island prehistory, geology, and conservation for the upper grades at the local school. Lectures are also being given to the local tour guides.

Still needed are more park guards and equipment. Future plans include closing off the interior of Rano Raraku to



Work on restoration of the so-called "house of Hotu Matu'a" at Anakena (Photo: J-M. Ramírez)

horses and cattle by providing a water source from outside the crater lake for animals.

- A "help house" to provide assistance and consultation for young people, the first to be implemented on the island, will be built in the coming months thanks to an agreement signed by the Instituto Nacional de Juventud, INJ, and the local municipality.

The regional director of the organization, Marcel Theza Manriquez, explained that the initiative will be carried out thanks to the efforts of the Island community that organized the project. Theza added that the instituto made contact with



Restored hare paenga at Rano Raraku  
(Photo: José Miguel Ramirez)

the municipal authorities on the island after a study revealed the needs of Island youth for a place of learning, recreation and culture. The INJ representative added that in the future it will assist in resolving a series of psycho-social problems that many Island youths encounter, such as the consumption of drugs and alcohol problems of which the locals are well aware of.

- A dead dolphin washed up at Tongariki with shark marks on its side. Images of dolphins are seen in petroglyphs of the island, and dolphin bones have been found in archaeological excavations. Undoubtedly the appearance of these creatures was more common in earlier days.

- An article in *El Mercurio de Valparaíso*, dated 18 May 96, noted that public investment has now reached US \$15.4 million for various works of improvement on the Island. So announced Governor Jacobo Hey, who made it clear that

these funds have been directed preferentially towards public works, education, and sports and recreation. Among the major projects are repairs to the runway of Mataverí Airport and improvement of the road between Hanga Roa and Anakena. Together these will cost US \$11.8 million, or 76.3% of the assigned amount. Added to these are works relative to the program of paving the streets in Hanga Roa. The cost is US\$1.52 million.

With respect to the development of a Housing Program, 30 "solutions in the manner of rural subsidy" are being set up which should cover the total demand of the islanders until the year 2000. Hey said that this represents an investment of US \$467,000.

Hey stated: "Furthermore, one should consider the renovation and enlargement of the electrical net on the island, the materialization of the project of transmission via satellite of the national TV station, at a cost of US \$256,000; repairing the pier at Hiro Moko in Anakena for US \$19,700; a program of control of insects and rodents for US \$49,000, and the repair of the school roof for US \$359,000."

Finally, the National Commission of Indigenous Development, CONADI, is investing US \$246,000 in various development programs.

- The 2700 residents of Hanga Roa now receive direct national TV from the mainland. The new antennae, which measures 13 meters (42.6') in diameter, was officially inaugurated in August. The ceremony took place at the site of the antennae, near the lower slopes of Rano Kau and close to the Conaf office.

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